

**County of Loudoun**  
**Department of Planning**

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** December 14, 2006

**TO:** Stephen Gardner, Project Manager  
Land Use Review

**FROM:** Michael (Miguel) Salinas, Senior Planner  
Community Planning

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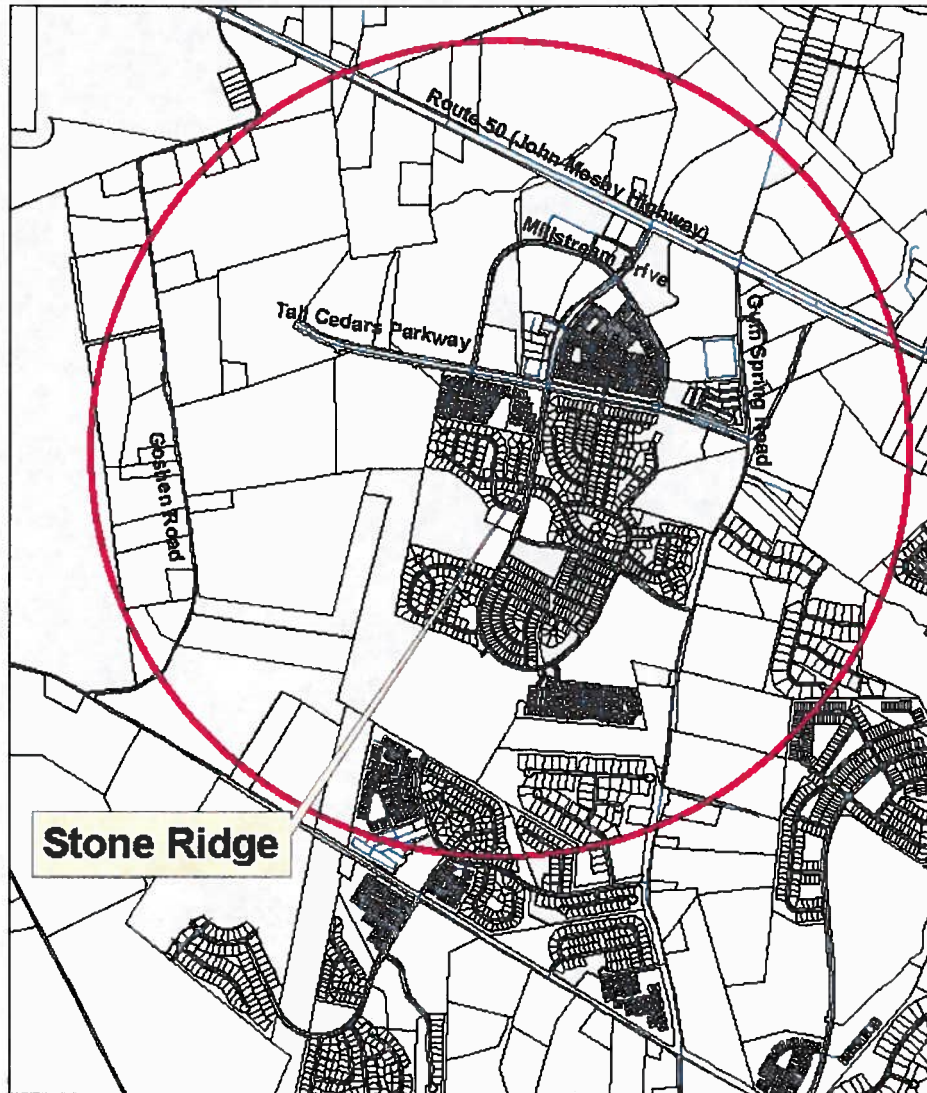
**SUBJECT: ZMAP 2006-0011 and ZCPA 2006-0003 Stone Ridge Commercial, 1<sup>st</sup> Referral**

**BACKGROUND**

Stone Ridge Community Development, LLC (the "applicant") is requesting a rezoning ("Stone Ridge Commercial") of approximately 42 acres of Land Bay DD along Millstream Drive from PD-IP to PD-OP (approximately 24 acres) and R-16 (approximately 18 acres). The rezoning of Land Bay DD would result in an additional 307 multi-family dwelling units to Stone Ridge, along the north side of Tall Cedars Parkway, with a resultant density of 16 dwelling units per acre, exclusive of Affordable Dwelling Units. The conversion would create a contiguous corridor of residential development along both sides of the parkway from Gum Spring Road to Route 659 Relocated. The applicant also proposes to add and rezone newly acquired properties at the southwest quadrant of the Gum Spring Road and Route 50 intersection and rezone said properties to reflect the applicant's proposed Gum Spring Road realignment. To compensate for the loss of employment uses by the partial conversion of Land Bay DD to multi-family residential, the applicant is proposing to amend the current proffers by increasing the maximum Floor Area Ratios (FAR) for Land Bays 7, DD1 and FF2 (Concept Development Plan, Sheet 3 of 10).

The Stone Ridge community was originally approved as a mixed-use, planned community on approximately 800 acres within the Route 50 corridor and included a core of employment-related land uses for community residents. The community is located at the southwest intersection of Gum Spring Road and Route 50 and is bisected east-west by Tall Cedars Parkway and north-south by Stone Springs Boulevard (see Location Map below). Green infrastructure elements are present on the site, including tributaries of the South Fork of the Broad Run, moderately steep slopes, forest cover, jurisdictional wetlands, and river and stream corridor resources. The site also includes a 250-foot wide, north-south overhead power and underground natural gas easement adjacent to the west boundary of Land Bay DD, the Ldn 60-65 aircraft noise contour, and the one-mile buffer of the Ldn 60-65 noise contour.

## Location Map



0 1,200 2,400 4,800 Feet

## COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The policies of the Revised General Plan, the Dulles South Area Management Plan (DSAMP), the Revised Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP), and the Loudoun County Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (Bike/Ped Plan) govern the subject site. Being the newer of the two plans, the Revised General Plan supercedes the DSAMP when there is a policy conflict between the two (Revised General Plan, text, p. 1-3). The subject site is located in the Dulles community of the Suburban Policy Area and is planned for Business land uses.

## ANALYSIS

### A. LAND USE

Stone Ridge was originally approved by ZMAP 1994-0017 as a planned, mixed-use, community on approximately 800 acres. The rezoning approved a maximum of 2,792 residential units, up to 347,600 sq. feet of retail, 269,800 sq. ft. of office, 2.31 million sq. ft. of light and general industry, a middle school, a County library site, and a 26-acre County park.

On December 6, 2005, the Board of Supervisors approved ZMAP 2002-0013 and ZCPA 2002-0004 ("Stone Ridge"). Approval of the application added approximately 77 acres of property to Stone Ridge, rezoned approximately 247 acres of the original property, and added 472 dwelling units (including 32 ADU's). The Stone Ridge rezoning also resulted in an amendment to the proffers that deleted the requirement to convey a 7.5 acre library site to the County and in its stead required the applicant to provide 40,000 square feet of space for the public library in an office building to be constructed by the applicant on existing Land Bay FF2.

The applicant proposes to add approximately 5.66 acres of newly acquired properties at the southwest quadrant of the existing Gum Spring Road and Route 50 intersection to the Stone Ridge community and rezone approximately 3.14 acres within that area to PD-OP and R-24 (with the remainder to stay CLI or PD-OP). The rezoned properties would be incorporated into existing Land Bays FF1 and FF2 (Concept Development Plan, Sheet 3 of 10). The applicant also proposes to rezone existing Land Bay DD (42 acres) from PD-IP to PD-OP (24 acres) and R-16 (18 acres). Land Bay DD is adjacent to the north side of Tall Cedars Parkway and is currently bisected north-south by Millstream Drive. The applicant states the rezoning of Land Bay DD is to *"provide areas for office development within Stone Ridge and to provide a multi-family land bay on the north side of Tall Cedars Parkway that will complete a corridor of compatible land uses along Tall Cedars Parkway within Stone Ridge from Gum Spring Road to Relocated Route 659"* ("Statement of Justification", p. 1). To compensate for the loss of employment uses by the partial conversion of Land Bay DD to multi-family residential, the applicant is requesting approval to amend the proffers of ZMAP 2002-0013 and



allow an increase in the maximum permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for Land Bays 7, DD1 and FF2 to .40. Graphic 1 below illustrates the applicant's proposed land bays as outlined in the applicant's Concept Development Plan.

**Graphic 1: Proposed Stone Ridge Land Use Bays per ZMAP 2006-0003\***



\* Map also shows the existing 250-wide utility easement and boundaries of the river and stream corridors

Table 1 below compares the land use mix, measured as a percentage of overall land area, which resulted from previously approved Stone Ridge rezonings versus the current application. Based on percentages, Table 1 demonstrates that approval of Stone Ridge Commercial would result in a minimal change to the overall land area dedicated to employment-related land uses and the overall land use mix of the Stone Ridge community. The approximately 2% increase in land area for residential land uses corresponds with the 2.0% decrease in office and light industrial land uses through the conversion of the approximately 18 acres of industrial-zoned property from Land Bay DD to multi-family residential (R-16). Staff, however, has identified three major land use issues of concern.

**Table 1: Land Use Mix Comparison**

	<b>ZMAP 1994-0017</b>		<b>ZMAP 2002-0013*</b>		<b>ZMAP 2006-0003*</b>	
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Ac.</b>	<b>%</b>
Residential	374.3	46.8%	447.0	57.8%	465.8	60.0%
Commercial Retail	34.2	4.5%	31.0	4.0%	31.0	4.0%
Office/Light Industrial	199.2	24.9%	56.2	7.3%	41.0	5.3%
Parks/Open Space	150.3	18.8%	178.0	23.0%	178.0	23.0%
Public/Civic	42.0	5.0%	61.0	7.9%	61.0	7.9%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>800.0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>773.2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>776.8</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Within the Suburban Policy Area portion

First, the impact of the Stone Ridge Commercial application, and in particular the rezoning of a portion of Land Bay DD from industrial to residential, would result in continued erosion of employment-related land uses that are emphasized within the Business community policies of the Revised General Plan and the original Stone Ridge community land use mix (ZMAP 1994-0017). The applicant states that the proposed rezoning is consistent with the Suburban Policy Area land use recommendations for residential communities. The subject site, however, is planned for Business where an emphasis is placed on employment-related land uses (office & industrial) that can also feature housing, commercial/retail, public/civic uses, parks, and open space so individuals can live near where they work while also having convenient access to services, shops, and recreation (Revised General Plan, text, p. 6-20 and Planned Land Use Map, p. 7-23).

Second, the Revised General Plan stresses the importance of placing business land uses along business corridors (Revised General Plan, text and Policy 2, p. 6-20 & Policy 6, p. 4-9). Land Bay DD is located between Route 50 and Tall Cedars Parkway – a minor arterial and major collector, respectively. Any further erosion of land dedicated to employment-related land uses within the Stone Ridge community will negatively impact the County's opportunity to maximize employment opportunities for residents of Stone Ridge and the surrounding community along these business corridors.

Third, the applicant's request to increase the maximum FAR of Land Bays 7, DD1 and FF2 does not guarantee that development will build to that maximum level of intensity. The Stone Ridge community is subject to the proffers set forth in the original rezoning application (ZMAP 1994-0017) and as amended by the most recent rezoning (ZMAP 2002-0013). The proffers established maximum FAR's for certain non-residential areas of the community that were lower than the .40 FAR that is generally allowed by the County's zoning ordinance for PD-IP and PD-OP zoned property. The proffers indicate a commitment to a maximum .30 FAR for Land Bay 7, .311 FAR for Land Bay FF2, and



a .28 FAR for Land Bay DD - an average .30 FAR. Loudoun County, however, is not currently a high intensity market. The average FAR the County is experiencing is significantly less than the applicant's proposed build-out FAR of .40. As of December 2005, office and industrial zoned land along Loudoun County's business corridors are actually building at an average FAR intensity of .23 (Economic Development Market Analysis of Eastern Loudoun County Office and Industrial Land, p. 2, May 2006). If current trends hold, office and industrial development within Stone Ridge will be built to a much lower intensity. Table 2 below compares the projected square footage of employment-related land uses at build-out under the existing Stone Ridge community versus this application, based on the County's current average intensity of .23 FAR.

**Table 2: Build-Out Summary**

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Existing Totals</b>	<b>Proposed Totals</b>	<b>Total Change</b>
Residential	3,265 Units	3,572 Units	307 Units
Single Family Detached	853 Units	853 Units	-
Multi-Family	671 Units	978 Units	307 Units
Townhouse	1,741 Units	1,741 Units	-
Office*	195,367 sq. ft.	505,002 sq. ft.	309,635 sq. ft.
General & Light Industrial*	501,742 sq. ft.	84,058 sq. ft.	(417,684 sq. ft.)
Retail	292,000 sq. ft.	292,000 sq. ft.	-
<b>Totals**</b>	<b>989,108 sq. ft.</b>	<b>777,219 sq. ft.</b>	<b>(108,049) sq. ft.</b>

\*Calculations of square footage for office and industrial land bays proposed in current application are based on .23 FAR. The square footage of existing Land Bay FF2 not included with this application is based on a .311 FAR as identified in the Concept Development Plan approved by ZMAP 2002-0013.

\*\*Totals do not include residential square footage.

Even if the applicant proffers a maximum FAR for Land Bays 7, DD1 and FF2 of .40, the historical build-out intensity of office and industrial property would likely result in Stone Ridge losing over 100,000 square feet of employment-related land uses. This will negate the applicant's efforts to mitigate their impact of reducing the land area dedicated to employment land uses within Stone Ridge by increasing the proffered FAR's. It is also important to note that smaller residential communities to the east of Stone Ridge have relied upon the community to provide employment opportunities for residents of their developments. Any change to the approved Concept Development Plan that erodes land areas dedicated to employment-related land uses within Stone Ridge will have a negative impact on surrounding residential developments.

***Staff does not support any further conversion of land from employment-related land uses to residential uses within the Business community portion of Stone Ridge based on three concerns. First, the impact of the Stone Ridge Commercial application, and in particular the rezoning of a portion of Land Bay DD from industrial to residential, would result in continued erosion of employment-related land uses that are emphasized within the Business community policies of the Revised General Plan and the original Stone Ridge community land use mix. Second, further erosion of land dedicated to employment-related land uses within the Stone Ridge community will negatively impact the County's opportunity to maximize employment opportunities for residents of Stone Ridge and the surrounding community along these business corridors. Third, the applicant's request to increase the maximum FAR of Land Bays 7, DD1 and FF2 does not guarantee that development will build to that maximum level of intensity and could in fact result in the loss of over 100,000 square feet of employment-related land uses. This will negate the applicant's efforts to mitigate their impact of reducing the land area dedicated to employment land uses within Stone Ridge by increasing the maximum FAR's, will further erode employment opportunities between Tall Cedars Parkway and Route 50, and will have a negative impact on surrounding residential developments.***

In addition to the fundamental land use issues related to the loss of business land areas within Stone Ridge, staff has identified additional issues related to the proposal. These issues are outlined below.

## **1. Compatability**

Although subordinate to employment-related land uses, housing is a recommended use within areas planned for Business. Careful consideration should be given to the placement of non-residential and residential development so that potential conflicts are minimized.

One way to minimize potential land use conflicts is to utilize the County's green infrastructure to shape land uses and to structure the various elements of development (Revised General Plan, text, p. 2-5). The eastern boundary of Land Bay DD, where the applicant proposes to rezone approximately 18 acres for multi-family residential, is defined by the existence of a north-south stream corridor that includes a tributary of the South Fork of the Broad Run, 100-year floodplain, some forested vegetation, and a stormwater management pond (Existing Conditions, Sheet 4 of 10).



The proposed boundary of Land Bay DD2 for additional multi-family residential does not take into account the stream corridor. Land Bay DD is currently planned for employment-related uses and is separated from existing residential to the east by the natural stream corridor. The stream corridor is an environmental feature that can be preserved and enhanced to maintain a natural and visual buffer from differing land uses on either side of the corridor (see Existing Conditions below) and provides opportunities for linear pedestrian linkage along the corridor between Tall Cedars Parkway and Millstream Drive. Land Bay DD is also bounded on the west by an existing 250-wide easement that contains underground transmission and high-voltage power lines. The existence of the utility easement, when combined with the natural stream corridor, makes Land Bay DD ideally suited for employment-related land uses.

**Graphic 2: Stream Corridor adjacent to the east boundary of Land Bay DD**





In addition, the applicant's proposed placement of Land Bay DD2 is contrary to the applicant's original Statement of Justification for the original Stone Ridge application (ZMAP 1994-0017) that stated natural site characteristics and topography will be used to distribute residential density within Stone Ridge with individual neighborhoods buffered from non-residential areas by means of topographic variation, woodlands, open space and parks ("*Community Planning Referral*", ZMAP 2002-0013/ZCPA 2002-0004, p. 4, February 14, 2005).

***The applicant's proposed Land Bay DD2, where multi-family residential is located, does not take into account the stream corridor that currently defines the separation of existing residential land uses from planned employment-related land uses, and is contrary to Stone Ridge's original intent to utilize green infrastructure to separate residential and non-residential land uses. Land Bay DD is also bounded on the west by an existing 250-wide easement that contains underground transmission and high-voltage power lines. The existence of the utility easement, when combined with the natural stream corridor, makes Land Bay DD ideally suited for employment-related land uses.***

## **2. Land Bay Consistency**

Land Bay FF2, as identified in Sheet 3 of 10 in the Concept Development Plan, does not include the remainder of Land Bay FF2 in the existing Stone Ridge community between Stone Springs Boulevard and the existing wet pond. Staff is requesting the Land Bay FF2 to be consistent with the existing Stone Ridge Concept Development Plan as approved by ZMAP 2002-0013.

***Staff is requesting the applicant revise Sheet 3 of 10 in Concept Development Plan to show the boundary of Land Bay FF2 to include that portion of existing Land Bay FF2 generally between Stone Springs Boulevard and the existing wet pond, as identified in the Stone Ridge Concept Development Plan approved with ZMAP 2002-0013. All tabulation tables in the Stone Ridge Commercial application should reflect this change.***

## **B. DENSITY**

Housing densities from 8 to 16 dwelling units per acre are permitted in mixed-use business developments (Revised General Plan, Policy 1, p. 6-18). The applicant proposes 287 multi-family residential units, exclusive of Affordable Dwelling Units, on approximately 16 acres of a newly created Land Bay DD2 (Concept Development Plan, Sheet 3 of 10). The density meets the recommended density for High Density Residential land uses within the Business community.

***The applicant's proposed density meets the maximum density allowed in areas planned for business land uses.***

### **C. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The Revised General Plan defines the County's Green Infrastructure as a "collection of natural, cultural, heritage, environmental, protected, passive, and active resources that will be integrated in a related system" (Revised General Plan, Policy 1, p. 5-1). Examples of green infrastructure components include stream and river corridors, wetlands, forested areas, tree stands, steep slopes, greenways, trails, historic and archeological sites and other open spaces. Green infrastructure is the framework and unifying element that determines where and how development will occur within Loudoun County (Revised General Plan, text, p.5-1).

The applicant's Concept Development Plan shows two tributaries affecting the subject site that feed the South Fork of the Broad Run. A north-south tributary defines the eastern boundary of the applicant's proposed Land Bays DD1 and DD2. The second north-south tributary is located within Land Bay FF2 and traverses the western portion of Land Bay FF1 (Concept Development Plan, Sheet 3 of 10). The tributaries include 100-year floodplains. The subject site also includes some forest cover, moderately steep slopes associated with the South Fork of the Broad Run at the far northern portions of Land Bays 7 and DD1, and forested and emergent wetlands within Land Bays FF1 and FF2.

#### **1. Stream Corridor**

Stone Ridge is located within the Broad Run watershed and includes river and stream corridor resources (Revised General Plan, River and Stream Corridor Resources Map & Major and Sub-Watersheds Map, pp. 5-7 & 5-13). The Revised General Plan establishes stream corridor policies that reinforce the important role rivers and stream corridors play in protecting Loudoun County's water resources (Revised General Plan, text, p. 5-5 & 5-12). Stream corridor policies include the protection of rivers and streams, adjacent steep slopes, wetlands, forests, and historic, cultural and archeological resources within the floodplain, and a 50-foot management buffer adjacent to the floodplain and steep slopes (Revised General Plan, Policy 2, p. 5-6). Within the floodplain and 50-foot management buffer, uses are limited to activities that will support and enhance the biological integrity and health of the river and stream corridor, including passive and active recreation, road crossings, pervious paths and trails, and agricultural activities (Revised General Plan, Policy 18, p. 5-10).



The applicant's Concept Development Plan shows two tributaries affecting the subject site that feed the South Fork of the Broad Run. A north-south tributary defines the eastern boundary of the applicant's proposed Land Bays DD1 and DD2. The second north-south tributary is located within Land Bay FF2 and traverses the western portion of Land Bay FF1 (Concept Development Plan, Sheet 3 of 10). Emergent wetlands are also located within Land Bays FF1 and FF2 adjacent to the tributary.

The applicant's Concept Development Plan does not delineate a 50-foot management buffer along the two Broad Run tributaries. Adding the management buffer to Land Bays DD1, DD2, FF1 and FF2 will impact the land areas available for development. The stream corridor along the eastern boundary of Land Bay DD1 on the applicant's Concept Development Plan also includes a portion of the floodplain that does not extend more than 100 feet from the bank of the tributary. The narrow width of the floodplain in this section may not allow for adequate filtration to occur before stormwater runoff reaches the South Fork of the Broad Run. The Revised General Plan includes a stream corridor policy that states within areas where the 100-year floodplain does not extend beyond the bank of the stream by 100 feet, then a minimum 100-foot stream buffer will be required inclusive of the 50-foot management buffer (Revised General Plan, Policy 3, p. 5-6).

***Staff recommends the applicant include river and stream corridor resources, including the 50-foot management buffer, on the Concept Development Plan. Staff also recommends the applicant provide a minimum 100-foot buffer, inclusive of the 50-foot management buffer, along segments of the tributaries where the floodplain does not extend beyond 100 feet. Last, staff recommends the applicant commit to the protection, enhancement and long-term maintenance of the stream corridors along the two tributaries.***

## **2. Forests, Trees, and Vegetation**

The Revised General Plan calls for the preservation, protection and management of forests and natural vegetation for the various economic and environmental benefits that they provide (Revised General Plan, Policy 1, p. 5-32). Staff supports the preservation of existing forest and vegetation along the tributaries to the maximum extent possible. The application's Tree Cover Exhibit (Sheet 9 of 10) indicates a mixed hardwood tree cover adjacent to segment of the Broad Run tributary on the eastern boundary of existing Land Bay DD. Staff supports the establishment of a forested buffer along the tributary and within the stream corridor in order to buffer the non-residential and residential land uses from each other and to protect the overall water quality of the Broad Run.

***Staff recommends the applicant commit to protecting the overall quality of the Broad Run through the preservation of existing forest and vegetation along the tributaries of the subject site to the maximum extent possible. In particular, Staff supports the establishment of a forested buffer along the tributary and within the stream corridor adjacent to the east boundary of existing Land Bay DD in order to further buffer the non-residential and residential land uses from each other and to protect the overall water quality of the Broad Run.***

### **3. Historic Resources**

The Revised General Plan states the County will require an archeological and historic resources survey as part of all development applications and include a plan for recordation and preservation of any identified resources, along with measures for mitigation and adaptive reuse (Revised General Plan, Policy 11, p. 5-36). The applicant submitted an addendum to the report titled "*Phase 1 Archeological Investigations of the 124.5 Acre Glascock Property, Loudoun County, Virginia*".

Staff's review of the submitted report will be sent under separate cover.

### **D. CAPITAL FACILITIES**

Under the Revised General Plan, all residential rezoning requests will be evaluated in accordance with the Capital Facility policies of the Plan (Revised General Plan, Policy 3, p. 3-5). The Revised General Plan calls for capital facilities contributions valued at 100 percent of capital facility costs per dwelling unit at densities above the specified base density (Revised General Plan, Proffer Guidelines, p. 11-1).

Because of the major land use issues associated with this application, Capital Facilities have not been reviewed. If this application is considered further, staff will calculate the Capital Facilities Contributions for subsequent referrals.

### **E. OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

To achieve higher density housing, "the Board of Supervisors anticipates evidence of participation in the Open Space Preservation Program". "Land contribution on an acre-by-acre basis is desired. However, if the land offered does not suit the County in terms of quality or location, the County may consider cash in lieu of the land for the purchase of open space. The County anticipates that cash donations for open space will be spent in the Suburban Community in which the increased density is granted" (Revised General Plan, Policy 3, p. 11-3). Contributions should be provided to enable the County to purchase Suburban Policy Area open space to offset the density proposed by the development.



Because of major land use issues associated with this application, Open Space calculations have not been reviewed. If this application is considered further, Staff will recommend contributions to the County's Open Space Preservation Program for subsequent referrals.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Community Planning Staff is not able to support the rezoning request. Staff does not support any further conversion of land from employment to residential within the Business community portion of Stone Ridge. Any reduction of land dedicated to employment uses will further erode employment opportunities between Tall Cedars Parkway and Route 50, will have a negative impact on surrounding residential developments, and will increase the negative fiscal impacts of residential development by disrupting the residential/non-residential balance of Stone Ridge.

Staff is available to meet with the applicant to discuss these issues.

cc: Julie Pastor, AICP, Planning Director  
Cindy Keegan, AICP, Program Manager, Community Planning

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